

Men Make Houses; Women Make Homes

The Little Things of Life: Their Meaning to Women

It is the little things of life that make up its sum and substance. Big things happen once, twice or three times in a lifetime, but little things begin the tale of each morning and close the record of each evening from year's end to year's end. As life hinges, not on big things but on little things, that woman to whom the common, trivial round brings pleasure and interest is fortunate indeed. A bright morning's sunshine, with the swallows twittering in the eaves, with a hint of springtime in the crisp outside air, with the grass starting its green sprigs up through the brown, bare earth, can fill her cup of pleasure quite to the brim and turn her toward her day's program with a sense of elation calculated to carry her successfully to its finish, with a mood that translates even its minor events into the language of pure enjoyment.

When the big things of life come from the realm of the ordinary into the extraordinary, her nature rouses itself in answer to the demand upon it. But neither the requirements of life nor her inclinations render her lingering outside of her normal sphere of feeling and action a desirable thing, after the demand extraordinary ceases. Not all women are rainbow chasers. New avenues of work for women, new conditions rendering them independent and somewhat self-sufficient, new organizations, where they are pitted against each other or where they find their strength in union, have made many of them unimpaired of their limitations and wildly ambitious in attempting the achievement of impossible things. But there are still a goodly number left who realize that though they may not be able to write books, they can dust those on their library shelves; that though they may not thrill big audiences from the rostrum, they may still sweep the hearth bright and kindle the kindling, around which a home circle can gather for that intimate and tender communion in which is found the highest and truest happiness that falls to the lot of mortality.

The simple things of life are close at hand and may be taken up at will by all women. At the door of some opportunity never knocks. The footsteps of others are often turned back when they are standing on the very threshold of achievement. But on the tombstone of every woman who orders her life aright may be written the epitaph: "She hath done what she could." Not what she desired or planned, perhaps, not what she looked forward to, but what "she could." There is never any special merit in trying to perform the impossible and losing heart and time in vain regrets over finding out what should have been apparent in the beginning. But there is always honor and credit in doing anything, even the simplest thing, well. Just being a good, plain woman is in itself one of the greatest of life's successes. If such a woman does all she can through the promptings of kindness, tolerance and interest, she will be a vital exemplification of the value of simple things, their meaning and their power.

With the world a large novaders simplicity and dulness are synonymous, and the woman who leads a simple life is considered to be undoubtedly narrow. But, on the other hand, many women living in the very heart of things find existence a very humdrum affair. A woman has to be so rarely constituted as to be independent of environment in her enjoyment of life not to find luxury and society dull in themselves and travel monotonous after the novelty has once worn off its gloss.

A little child's kiss upon the cheek, little simple joys of living and loving, little daily cares, all seemingly inconsequent when taken singly, are linked together in the close-knit chain that begins at the cradle and ends at the grave. Women should understand the blessings that are around and about them in the turning up of these little things before it is too late, for though "The bird of life is singing in the sun, Short is his song, nor only just begun; A call, a thrill, a rapture, then so soon A silence, and the song is done, is done."

There are some houses in which a woman is the home. Its rooms may lack the interior style and decoration that render others cheap beside them, but its mistress will be not among the number of those who in a passion for refinement has lost the very essence of life. She will rather have kept so close to "wind and sun and summer rain" as to have a relish for the realism and value of the little, simple lessons that are written in the book of Nature, as in the book of life.

ALICE M. TYLER.

Miss Gaskins Winner.

The valentine prize is awarded Miss Isabel Vaumeter Gaskins, of Warrenton, Va., whose poem follows here. Thanks are due Miss Janie C. Slaughter, of Farmville, Va.; Mrs. M. W. Glass, of Richmond; Mrs. J. D. Reynolds, of city; A. F. H. Halifax Street, Petersburg; Mrs. M. A. Pearson, Petersburg; Mrs. Byrd P. Donally, Louisa, Va.; Miss I. L. Walker, Richmond; Miss Elizabeth Weed, Staunton; Miss M. B. Martin, Petersburg; Mrs. George L. Corbin, Durham, N. C.; Mrs. A. C. Stover, Richmond; Mrs. Myra Edwards, city; Mrs. J. L. Whitshire, city; Miss Gravelle, Martinsville, Va.; Mrs. T. Mack, Danville, Miss Elizabeth K. Ingram, South Boston, Va.; Mrs. C. R. Garnett, city, and Mrs. I. C. May, Louisa, Va. Here is Miss Gaskins' valentine:

A Valentine.

Mid winter snows full off the rose
My lady's gown doth grace,
And violets blue the whole year through
Bloom near her winsome face;
But still her heart with joy will start
When buds begin to spring,
And her sweet eyes great brightening skies
With brighter welcoming.

Then come, thou quaint and friendly saint,
Teach me the time to choose,
The magic hour that owns thy power
She never can refuse;
Listen, sweet maid, be not afraid,
The year is thine and mine,
The glad birds sing, love's on the wing,
Come, be my Valentine!

ISABEL VAMETER GASKINS,
Warrenton, Va.

A New Contest

1. In which of Dickens' novels is hearer of a parish boy described? 2. Which exposes the deficiencies of Yorkshire schools? 3. Which gives a beautiful picture of child life? 4. Which is a satire on American? 5. Which is the author's favorite work? 6. Which assails the abuses and delays of chancery? 7. Which was an attack on the manufacturing interests? 8. Which is literary caricature of society at large? 9. Which portrays the art of living upon nothing and making the best of it? 10. Which of his books was written for children? The contest ends Saturday, February 27.

It's All in the Shape.

If the "ladies" embroidered linen belts, or well-curveded, or, perhaps, in slipping up to disclose the waist and skirt attachments, there is a way out—and it's all in the shape. Was there ever a problem in the realm of fashion that could not be solved by some woman's genius?

There are women who have exactly the correct contour to be perfectly fitted about the waist line by a straight band of material, which "lays out" but is a reason to suppose that every belt must needs be straight? It is quite enough of a tax on the general availability to except the lace stock "made in one size only" for every neck (the saints be praised) for collars, or for the skin band, and the neat narrowness in the front slips more readily into most belt buckles.

Paris Fashion Hints

New Togue.

The "Marie Antoinette" is the name of a new French touque made of straw or shirred liberty satin, and trimmed halfway to the high crown with a wreath of tiny hand-made and gold roses.

Washable Tulle.

Washable tulle is very popular for the summer blouse and for little children's best dresses. The tulle is made up separately over pale pink or blue, and the prettiest of them are noticeable for their simplicity, being tucked by hand and without trimming. Tulle and linen jabots range from the simple pleated frill to the most intricate double lace creations.

Rose Vogue.

One pink or deep red rose is used on the front of some of the spring models in hats. Small, light pink roses alternate with forget-me-nots, tight bunches of pale pink roses appear on a pink straw hat, and two immense roses, flat in shape, are sometimes used on the same hat.

Helpful Thought.

Helpful thoughts are at a premium in a world where love are offered. Here is one: When gold shirt-waist studs have no chain to fasten them together, they should be tied at proper intervals to a narrow white wash ribbon. In this way, they will not drop out and get lost.

Sheer Linings.

With the present fashion of tight sleeves it is rather difficult to know how to line them, for the ordinary cotton lining, although it will protect the arm from wooden materials worn in the winter, will prove to be in the end, rather warm. Then, too, the sleeves must be quite tight fitting, and a lining should not encase.

Why not line the sleeves with white chamois silk? It will be more comfortable, and the sleeves may be much more easily arranged.

For the Seamstress

A Suitable Needle.

If a woman desires to get the best results in her home dressmaking and sewing, she will be careful to have her needle suit her cotton and both suit the material on which she is working. Many women are in the habit of having only No. 8 needles and No. 70 cotton in their work baskets. Using these indiscriminately, they should not be surprised when they do not accomplish such neat and pretty looking work as the woman who understands the right way of going to work.

Sizes Needed.

For tucking or seaming a No. 10 needle will be found most satisfactory. A No. 8 should not be used with cotton finer than 50 or 60, and these members are only necessary in the sewing of a very strong seam. A No. 1 needle and No. 10 cotton form a proper combination for ordinary material. On fine material No. 60 cotton with a No. 8 needle is better. For ordinary work on rather coarse material, No. 10 cotton is very good for gathering, but for fine muslin or fine muslin nothing coarser than No. 70 is proper.

French Underwear.

American women desiring dainty underwear should follow the example of the Parisienne, who has set a standard of beautifully fine lingerie, planned for her own well-chosen patterns, and embroidered by her. The design she most frequently uses is the very simplest, and therefore the most reliable for general wear. No embroidery could be simpler than the single scallop, with slots below it, when necessary, for washable ribbon.

The scallop is repeated on corset covers, nightdresses, chemises, and on short and long petticoats. The untrimmed damask cotton, so generally used for padding, is the Parisian choice, with a more twisted cotton for the bolero. Extreme carelessness of stitch in the embroidery, and the neatest of hand-made fells and hems, is distinctly Parisian.

Baby as a Box Flower.

The prettiest sight I have ever seen in a long while was on the lawn of a cottage on a mild sunny day this winter. The house plants, the baby included, were having a sun bath. Surrounded by pots of ferns and blooming hyacinths and azaleas, was the baby, seated in a large box which was painted green outside and softly cushioned and lined within.

The little fellow was quite alone on the lawn and he was smiling ecstatically as he looked around at the flowers and overhead at the tree full of chirping sparrows.

The mother had no nurse, she told me, and this big box-house for the baby was a great convenience. It was on stout rollers, and had a small mattress inside, over which was a piece of oilcloth, then a cotton blanket. The thing was, first, an old quilt, with a cover over this of pink percale or cambric that could be taken out and washed. The thing came just over the edge of the box, so as to prevent the baby's hurting himself by tripping against the wood. The flower-lined baby in the green box in the center of the other blooming things, made a charming picture.

Hay's Hair Health

Never Fails to Restore Gray Hair to Its Natural Color and Beauty.

No matter how long it has been grayed, Promotes a luxuriant growth of healthy hair. Stops falling out, and positively removes dandruff. Keeps hair soft and glossy. Refuse all substitutes. 2½ times as much in \$1.00 as 50c. size. Is Not a Bye, 5c and 50c. bottles, at druggists. Send 2c for free book "The Care of the Hair."

Hay's Hairina Soap cures Pimples, red, rough and chapped hands and all skin diseases. Keeps skin fine and soft. 25c. druggists. Send 2c for free book "The Care of the Skin."

Housewife's Hints

Marked Brooms.

Every housewife should have several plainly marked brooms so that cleaning the parlor carpet with the porch broom will be rendered impossible. Broom, dustpan and dusters on each floor will be found a great convenience. A small brush for cleaning ceiling will save many minutes and do its work well.

To Clean Clothes.

No matter how soiled a wool dress skirt is, it may be quickly and thoroughly cleaned with soap tree bark. Place a 5-cent package of the bark in a basin, pour over it three pints of boiling water, cover and steep for half an hour. Strain the liquid, reserve one pint for sponging, and place the rest in a clear dish. Pin the soiled skirt smoothly on an ironing board. Dip a soft brush into the solution and brush the skirt until it is as foamy mass. When it is all gone over, add a little clear water to the pint reserved, and with a piece of silk wrung out from it, carefully brush and sponge the skirt. Hang it in the air and sun until dry, and it will be found clean and fresh.

For the Hands.

Two bottles should be kept in a handy place in the kitchen, one containing five parts of lemon juice to one of alcohol, the other, one-fourth ounce of gum tragacanth added to a pint of water which has stood three days, then one ounce each of alcohol, glycerine and witchhazel, also a very little good perfume. After washing dishes, preparing vegetables or doing any of the rough kitchen work, apply a little of the lemon juice, then the other liquid, and in a moment the hands are dry, soft and very smooth. All stains disappear quickly and the nails are cleaned easily. This process repeated a few times each day will repay any housekeeper for the slight trouble. The expense of these preparations is comparatively nothing.

To Prolong Use.

The long lankie waists so popular of late are "fingers of beauty," but alas, not "fingers of sense" by any means. They are easily ruined in the laundering, and the broken lace is difficult, well-nigh impossible to mend. To greatly prolong their usefulness, buy combed wash net, cut in strips (or the shape of the insets), and sew upon the under side of the inserted lace when the waist is new or as soon as it begins to break. Even badly torn places may be mended in this way. The pattern being darned down invisibly upon the net. Many very open patterns are really improved in looks by the addition of the net.

The Best Glue.

For uniting cardboard, paper and small articles of fancy work, I find that the best glue, dissolved with one-third of its weight of coarse brown sugar in a small quantity of boiling water, is a good one. When this is in a liquid state it may be dropped in a thin cake upon a plate, and allowed to dry; when required for use end of the cake may be moistened and rubbed on the articles to be joined.

To Clean Carpets.

A good way of cleaning and brightening carpets is to give them a good, thorough sweeping. Then, using a clean mop out of water with a little ammonia in it and wipe the carpet over good. It will take off the dust and brighten the colors.

The Chest Box.

One busy housekeeper, the mother of a large family, keeps what she calls a "chest box." In it are a few nice hemstitched sheets and pillow cases, a pair of soft blankets, a counterpane, and some towels, wash cloths, bureau covers, a bath mat, a hairbrush, and the quilt, and several cakes of good soap. When the unexpected guest arrives, this simple bit of forethought enables the hostess to arrange in a few minutes a neat and comfortable room, and does away with the sad search through the linen closet for the freshest things she chances to find.

Convenient Investment. Anybody who has agonized at the sewing machine, while the silk, secured in its spool, has wrapped itself round the spindle and snapped at the cruel moment, will be glad to know that there is a little invention now on the market to prevent the loosening silk from getting below the spool.

The Helping Hand

Its Friendly Grasp.

A woman who had come out of great trials that would have killed many of her sex with her nature still sweet and her faith still intact, said once to a friend in trouble: "I know what you are suffering and I wish with all my heart to help you; for when life seemed so dark to me that I knew not where to turn or how to look up, I think what upheld me was the friendly grasp of a helping hand. And because of that hand, held out to succor and to save, I feel that all the sympathy of my nature is aroused in behalf of others, to whom I am due everything and more than I received."

Women can never overestimate the value and the power of the helping hand. It is strong to uplift and console, and all the more girls looked so fresh and measured, and only its stilling in death ceases the opportunities it forgets not to grasp.

What One Girl Did.

I was the scullion girl at the office. It was no one's fault and no one's shame that we were poor; I had intelligence enough to know that. I knew, too, what a sacrifice mother had made to pay for my tuition at a business school. Still, the knowledge of my shabby clothes forced itself upon me, particularly my old black skirt.

Oh, if you knew how I hated that skirt! Mother had cleaned it and pressed it, and it seemed "bent" with age, and all the more girls looked so fresh and pretty in their trim business suits. I imagined all the first morning that they were pitying me, and felt them looking at my shabbiness, and during noon hour I was so miserable. But when I went back the next morning I noticed that one of the girls had on nearly as old clothes as I did, and she was so nice to me I fancied she was glad I had come because of our mutual poverty. Not until I had earned enough money to buy some suitable, nice clothes did I realize that the "poor girl," as I thought her, had drifted back into the poorest, most tasteless clothes worn by any of the girls. She had only borne me company at a most trying time and she knew, because her fellow workers all admired her, that the little object lesson would keep them from huffing my feelings.

The day has come now when new clothes are usual, when I may achieve an appearance that is known as "stylish." But in my office when a girl comes in, shabby, painfully sensitive, as I was, I "bear her company" until the better times shall come.

Beneath Good Bread is Good Luck

Baking Powder.

Every housekeeper has a keen and commendable pride in her bread, biscuits, cake and other dainties that tempt the appetite and build brain and muscle for the members of her family.

The food satisfaction—this absolute certainty of tasty and healthful food is a very simple and easy matter. If you use "Good Luck" Baking Powder.

Kitchen Wisdom

Shrove Tuesday.

The Shrove Tuesday pancake is mentioned so frequently in literature that the day and the dish have become inextricably associated in the popular mind. The custom of eating these cakes dates back to a very remote period, and the tossing them in the pan has always been made the occasion of considerable merriment. The great bell, which used to be rung on this day to call the people to confession, was therefore known as the "pancake bell," a name which it still retains in those parts of the country where the custom is continued.

To make the old English pancakes, take a pint of cream, six eggs—leaving out two of the whites—three spoonfuls of orange-flower water, a little sugar, half a pint of flour, a quarter of a pound of melted butter, one grated nutmeg, and a little salt. When well mixed, fry thin.

White and Brown.

Sandwiches of a slice of white bread and a slice of brown bread, the brown bread having a "face" like a Jack-o'-lantern cut out, will be most effective, particularly if the white bread be spread with cranberry jelly, golden butter or cheese.

In Tomato Juice.

Eggs poached in a little tomato juice are a novelty that has a piquant flavor. Have rounds of Boston brown bread toasted and slip a couple of slices, each one, or make an omelet of slices, turn onto a hot platter and pour this stewed tomatoes about. A fan of parsley can be tucked between the omelet folds.

Fashion's Fancy.

Fruits in endless combinations make charming many a festive table of Fashion's fancy-to-day. Here is a pretty recipe: Pare, core and cook firm apples in a syrup made of a cupful of water, one of sherry, two of sugar and a small cinnamon stick. When tender lift carefully onto glass dishes. Fill the center with candied cherries and almonds, gracing the top of each with a spoonful of whipped cream topped by a single cherry; or thick cream may be passed instead of whipped cream.

Cocoanut Molds.

For a cocoanut molded desert dissolve a half package of gelatin in a little water. Bring a pint of milk to the boiling point, add sweetened condensed milk and the yolks of three beaten eggs and the gelatin, letting all come to the boil. Have ready the beaten whites of the eggs to which are added a cupful of shredded cocoanut, a cupful of dried macaroon crumbs and a few chopped almonds. Turn into molds to harden. Sprinkle with cocoanut.

Fancy Cake.

For these, cream one cupful of sugar and a tablespoonful of butter. Beat the whites and yolks of three eggs separately. Add first the yolks then the whites, beating well. Add a cupful of sifted flour to the sugar and butter, sifting a teaspoonful of cream of tartar and a half-teaspoonful of soda with the flour. Lastly add the beaten whites and flavoring. Bake in shallow pans and cut out in fancy animal and leaf shapes with cookie cutters. Ice the cake with chocolate, with tith of citron for eyes. The leaf shapes may be frosted green or yellow, and, if wished, veenings of angelica or shredded orange peel make most realistic autumn leaves.

Something New.

Read me a story without a moral, Where the two are one and Love is blind. Where the World takes breath before progressing. Where women are more of the clinging kind.

Read me a sweet old-fashioned story Where lovers are happy and marriage is bliss. Where parents and children are all united. And the crown of the day is the Mother's kiss.

Read me a story that rests me and cheers me. Instead of a tale of "problems" and pain. To compel my belief that the World is still rolling. From under the cloud into sunshine again.

For the Hostess

Her Invitation.

Come ye maidens of highest station. Come ye maidens young and fair. Lend your beauty, lend your graces. Flashing eyes, bepowdered hair.

Lend your wit, your smiles, your laughter. Beauty spots and dimples rare. 'Tis the nation's father's birthday. Patriot dames and maidens be there.

Her Luncheon Table.

For decorations use a cherry tree with realistic artificial cherries wired to its branches as a centerpiece. Place tall candles in brass candlesticks and have the gas jets veiled with shades of red, white and blue. Cherry log candy boxes make appropriate bonbon holders and may be filled with candied cherries.

Luncheon Menu.

Serve oyster soup in blue bowls and breadsticks tied with red, white and blue ribbon. Then, roast turkey and mashed potato croquettes, flying tith flags; also spaghetti à la maitre d'hôtel. The salad should be of apple, celery and nuts, filling red apples scooped out for the purpose. On the salad plate, place cannon balls of cottage cheese. For dessert, serve cherry sherbet with candied cherries, and cakes that have been cooked in cocked hat cases. Lastly, cherry bounce and safe note.

Another Luncheon.

Fill a toy drum with red and white carnations for a centerpiece. Hang it with broad blue satin ribbon, tied in a rosette at the side. Suspend flags fastened to red, white and blue gauze streamers from the chandelier, attaching the streamers with loose bows in a circle around the drum. As a menu the following may be commended: Tomato bouillon, finger rolls, creamed sweetbreads, rice croquettes, Jellies potatoes; cherry salad made from California cherries, the stones being replaced with blanched hazel nuts; cheese straws. For dessert have frozen custard with candied cherries and almonds, and white almond cake with the initials G. W. ornamenting the icing.

A Dinner Party.

Let the china be blue and gold, and the table ornamented with a plaque of yellow tulips, violets and daffodils. Use Washington picture cards to designate places, or little American flags thrust through cards inscribed with the names of guests. Use crystal candelabra and candlesticks with red and white candles. Serve: Tomato soup, waters; broiled white fish, radishes and bleached lettuce; fillets of turkey, creamed potatoes; stewed salsify, individual corn puddings; cherry ice, orange and celery salad; garnished with cheese balls; individual cherry pie, cheese crackers and coffee.

Historic Recipe.

Patriotic cake may be made from this recipe, handed down from the year 1776. The recipe says: To one pound of risen bread dough work in a pint of brown sugar, a half pint of butter, three unbeaten eggs, two tablespoons of cream. When worked into a smooth batter, add a level teaspoon of soda dissolved in one tablespoon of water, a half pound of English currants, the same of seeded raisins, one level teaspoon each of cloves and grated nutmeg; pour into a greased pan, set in a warm place to rise for twenty minutes. When cool, ice and ornament with candied cherries.

Cut Flowers, Tropical Plants, Bouquets and Designs

Delivered anywhere always promptly.

Mann & Brown,
Florists,
No. 5 West Broad Street, Richmond, Va.
Decorations of any kind.

Fonticello